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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 002565

NOFORN
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [OPDC](#) [GG](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: TFGG01: MEDVEDEV'S LETTER ON RECOGNITION; AID AND
AKHALGORI

REF: A. MOSCOW 2564
[1](#)B. MOSCOW 2556

Classified By: DCM Eric Rubin for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C/NF) Summary. Convoking the DCM on August 26 to convey Medvedev's letter informing President Bush of Russia's recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, DFM Karasin said Russia had tried for many years to find a peaceful solution to the conflict territories, and was deeply disappointed by the harsh Western reactions to Russia's use of force. He described Medvedev's decision to recognize the regions' independence as one of the most difficult subjects he had ever had to talk about, and asked for U.S. understanding of Russia's position. The DCM separately underscored our concern over GOR criticism of U.S. humanitarian assistance and the situation in Akhalgori. End Summary

Russia hopes for understanding

[1](#)2. (C/NF) Convoking the DCM on August 26 to convey President Medvedev's letter to President Bush regarding Russia's recognition of South Ossetian and Abkhaz independence (reftels), DFM Karasin told DCM that the GOR wanted the U.S. to be informed as early as possible. Referencing the proceedings in the Duma and Federation Council, along with Russian public opinion that supported South Ossetian and Abkhaz independence, Karasin stressed that Russia had tried for many years to find a peaceful resolution that acknowledged one Georgian territory to the conflicts in Georgia.

[1](#)3. (C/NF) Karasin then voiced "hurt and disappointment" with regard to the sharp reactions from the world after Russia's "neutralization efforts" to stop the violence in Georgia. He said Russian authorities had realized they must take strong action.

[1](#)4. (C/NF) Calling this one of the most difficult things he had had to speak about in his three years in the MFA, Karasin repeated the GOR's surprise at the harsh U.S./Western reactions after August 8, and acknowledged that there would remain many problems to overcome. Karasin called the letter he handed over "self-explanatory," but underscored that it contained the thoughts of President Medvedev in the context of recent developments. Karasin expressed hope that the U.S. would understand the GOR's position, noting the Russian Charge in Washington would also receive instructions regarding the letter.

¶5. (C) DCM noted the ongoing supply of U.S. humanitarian assistance and urged Russia to avoid conflating the provision of humanitarian assistance with military resupplies. He promised the U.S. would continue to keep the GOR informed about deliveries, with future ship visits notified as always in accordance with the Montreux Convention. Karasin agreed that the need for transparency was paramount, particularly since U.S. warships were the means of delivery. He called for official Navy contacts to communicate about aid deliveries, with diplomatic channels (on the Russian side the Fourth (CIS) Department of the MFA) "duplicating" these efforts, to avert problems.

¶6. (C) DCM also expressed U.S. concerns about the situation in Akhalgori, noting our ongoing dialogue with the OSCE and GOG over tensions generated by the attempted South Ossetian takeover of a Georgian village. He urged the GOR to take steps to avoid clashes. Karasin echoed the U.S. concerns and said he had just spoken with the head of the Russian General Staff, as well as de-facto South Ossetian President Kokoity. He confirmed Russian troops had strict orders to prevent aggression "from any side," but was unwilling to conclude that the Georgian side would not attempt to use force.

BEYRLE